Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194

# Clean Water Partnership Project
# Revised Work Plan

*Doc Type: Contract*

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| Swift #: | 82725 |
| CR #: | 7833 |

**Project Title:** Renville Co MN River Mankato Watershed Protection

## Project Summary:

**Organization:** Hawk Creek Watershed Project
**Contractor contact name:** Heidi Rauenhorst
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**MPCA contact(s):**

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**Major watershed(s):**

**Major watershed/HUC Code:** Minnesota River – Mankato / 07020007
**Latitude/Longitude for project:** 44.58333, -94.83333
**County:** Renville

**Project start/End dates:** October 1, 2014 / ~~September 30, 2017~~June 30, 2018

**Project Funding Type (check one):**
☐ **CWP Resource Investigation**
☒ **CWP Implementation**

**Grant Amount:**
**~~$242,587.00~~306,750.00**

**Proposed Cash Match Funds: $10,000.00**

**Proposed Inkind Match Funds:**
~~$232,600.00~~296,750.00

**Proposed Loan Funds:**
**$0.00**

**Total project cost:**
~~$485,187.00~~613,500.00

## 1. Statement of Problems, Opportunities, and Existing Conditions

The goal of this project is to protect the water bodies within the Renville County portion of the Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed from elevated nutrient levels, in particular phosphorus. A major focus of this project will be to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) in order to protect waterways of beneficial use and prevent impairments and degradation. The proposed work area includes those portions of the watersheds of Birch Coulee Creek, Purgatory Creek, Three Mile Creek, Fort Ridgely Creek, and Little Rock Creek that lie within Renville County and also the small areas between those respective watersheds, encompassing a total of 158,320 acres that drain directly to the Minnesota River. The communities of Morton, Franklin, and Fairfax are located within this priority area, along with several state and county parks, significant State Wildlife Management Areas, rare granite outcrops, several historical landmarks, and several listed rare plant and animal species.

The primary water quality concern this project addresses is the level of phosphorus threatening the Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed. These water bodies are not listed as impaired for excessive nutrients, but are at heightened risk, primarily due to the high percentage of intensively farmed land. With a highly manipulated hydrology, large quantities of water move through the watershed at elevated velocities, disrupting the natural stream equilibrium and resulting in substantial streambank erosion and increased loading of sediment and nutrients. Water bodies in the Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed need to be protected in order to maintain their highly-valued beneficial uses, including domestic and industrial consumption, aquatic life and recreation, agricultural and wildlife, and aesthetics and navigation. According to the draft Minnesota Nutrient Reduction Strategy (2013), the Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed is listed at the highest 8 digit hydrologic unit code watershed prioritization level for phosphorus and nitrogen. Prioritizing BMPs that target cropland runoff and streambank erosion is critical in reducing nutrients in order to achieve the Phase 1 Milestone by 2025 and the overall goals of the Nutrient Reduction Strategy. The Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed is also modeled as contributing the highest level of total nonpoint source nitrogen to Minnesota's surface waters, with agricultural lands as a primary source (Nitrogen in MN Surface Waters, MPCA, 2013).

To address nutrients in surface waters coming from the most common origins of upland sources (eroding soils and runoff from fields, animal feedlots, and urban areas) and near-channel sources (ravines, gullies, bluffs, and streambanks), multi-beneficial, targeted BMPs, such as buffer strips, grassed waterways, grade/gully stabilizations, streambank and shoreline stabilizations, tile intake protection practices, controlled drainage, wetland restorations/protection, and feedlot runoff reduction practices consistent with the practices described in the Lower Minnesota River Dissolved Oxygen Total Maximum daily Load Implementation Plan (http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/view-document.html?gid=8001, page 17 and 20) will be a priority in order to prevent impairments and degradation in these tributaries that flow directly to the Minnesota River.

The Hawk Creek Watershed Project (HCWP) has built strong, long-lasting relationships with collaborating organizations and has a Local Work Group consisting of local, state, and federal agency representatives that meet regularly to prioritize and collaborate on projects. A substantial amount of expertise exists among the collaborating organizations of this project, including Chippewa, Kandiyohi, and Renville Counties, Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), local water planners, ditch authorities, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, MPCA, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Although many HCWP Local Work Group organizations are not located in the work area of this project, their expertise is still incredibly valuable for implementing projects.

HCWP also works closely with local landowners, citizens, cities, community leaders, non-profit organizations, schools, and industries to plan and implement BMPs and find holistic strategies to water-related issues. HCWP has also made public outreach, participation, and education a priority, as it has been shown to increase ownership and leadership in watershed responsibilities, and will hopefully lead to more diverse community involvement in the decision making process of watershed issues to achieve more holistic solutions.

HCWP is an entity formed through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) between Chippewa, Kandiyohi, and Renville Counties. The Board of Directors is made up of one County Commissioner from each of the JPA counties.

## 2. Goals, Objectives, Tasks, and Subtasks

**Goal:** The goal of this project is to protect the water bodies within the Renville County portion of the Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed from elevated nutrient levels, in particular phosphorus, through BMP implementation in strategic targeted locations. This project will utilize outreach and education to incorporate public involvement and input into targeted BMP implementation and the decision making process of watershed issues.

**Objective 1**: Watershed Protection BMP Implementation

**Task A**: BMP Implementation

- Eligible practices include, but are not limited to: buffer strips, side inlets, alternative tile intakes, conservation drainage systems, water and sediment control basins (638s), grade stabilizations, streambank stabilizations, feedlot waste reduction projects, rain gardens, and other practices to protect water quality with cost-share up to 75% of total project costs
- Verify cost-share eligibility of BMPs
- Acquire services from contracted professional engineers via an open bid process for technical assistance on BMP projects
- Collaborate with landowners, contractors, and agency representatives to implement BMPs
- Collect BMP invoices and inkind
- Authorize cost-share and incentive payments and distribute funds

**Responsible Party**: Project Coordinator, Planner/Field Technician, Water Quality/Outreach Technician

**Task B:** BMP Implementation by Staff

- Assist willing landowners in implementing protective BMPs
- Obtain proper survey and design information as needed
- Certify final completion of project
- Complete required contract documents for each project and maintain record keeping of projects
- Complete necessary documentation and authorize cost-share payments
- Update the grant BMP cost-share journal
- Report pollution reductions and projects in eLINK to track progress of work done in critical areas
- Track mileage incurred by HCWP to fulfill grant objectives in a spreadsheet

**Responsible Party**: Project Coordinator, Planner/Field Technician, Water Quality/Outreach Technician

**Objective 1 Timeline:** October 1, 2014 - ~~October 31, 2017~~June 30, 2018
**Objective 1 Cost:** Grant ~~$143,840.00~~191,203.00 Inkind ~~$213,680.00~~277,830.00 Total ~~$357,520.00~~469,033.00
**Objective 1 Deliverables:** Summary of projects completed and pollutant reductions as part of semi-annual and final reports. eLINK entries of all BMPs and associated pollutant reductions.

**Objective 2**: Outreach and Education

**Task A**: Project Awareness by Involving Citizens

- Printing and postage for promotional mailings for HCWP annual meetings, BMP promotion in critical areas, educational and outreach activities
- Promotion of BMP cost-share funds and educational and outreach activities through media sources, such as newspaper, radio, Facebook, watershed website, brochures
- Outreach and education event supplies

**Responsible Party**: Project Coordinator, Planner/Field Technician, Water Quality/Outreach Technician

**Task B:** Outreach and Education by Staff

- Host regular citizen information and input meetings to build conversations, collaboration, knowledge, and involvement in water quality issues
- Participate in public events as a means to engage citizens in watershed stewardship
- Communicate and coordinate with local interest groups and resource professionals
- Market BMPs in critical areas through promotional activities
- Produce and disseminate periodic newsletters
- Utilize a variety of media outlets and printed materials to advertise BMP funding availability
- Develop PowerPoint, written, and oral presentations as outreach and educational tools
- Maintain HCWP website and social media accounts
- Maintain in-house HCWP display and develop materials to use on display board for events
- Track mileage incurred by HCWP to fulfill grant objectives in a spreadsheet

**Responsible Party**: Project Coordinator, Planner/Field Technician, Water Quality/Outreach Technician

**Objective 2 Timeline:** October 1, 2014 - ~~September 30, 2017~~ June 30, 2018
**Objective 2 Cost:** Grant ~~$76,947.00~~ 84,947.00 Inkind $23,940.00 Total ~~$100,887.00~~ 108,887.00
**Objective 2 Deliverables:** Promotional products, such as advertisements, newsletters, meeting notices and agendas, mailings, flyers, brochures. Summary of outreach and education activities as part of semi-annual and final reports. PowerPoint, written, and oral presentations of HCWP activities and programs.

**Objective 3**: Project Management

**Task A**: Project Management Implementation

- Manage fiscal administration services and pay for accounting and payroll services

**Responsible Party**: Project Coordinator

**Task B:** Project Management by Staff

- Track grant budget, matching funds, and expenditures
- Compile and organize invoices
- Authorize payment of bills
- Obtain in-kind documentation
- Maintain office equipment and purchase updated/replacement equipment as needed
- Prepare and submit semi-annual and final reports

**Responsible Party**: Project Coordinator

**Objective 3 Timeline:** October 1, 2014 – ~~October 31, 2017~~ June 30, 2018
**Objective 3 Cost:** Grant $~~21,800.00~~30,600.00 Inkind $4,980.00 Total $~~26,780.00~~35,580.00
**Objective 3 Deliverables:** Semi-annual and final reports including grant and in-kind expenditures.

## 3. Measurable Outcomes

1. The primary outcome of this project will be to work with five local landowners to implement BMPs that focus on protection of the Renville County portion of the Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed from elevated nutrient levels, in particular phosphorus. BMPs with multiple benefits, such as improving water quality, habitat, and hydrology, will be a priority. BMP pollutant reductions will be calculated and tracked by eLINK to measure the effectiveness of BMPs and progress of work done in critical areas. Based on past project pollutant reductions, the estimated pollutant reductions through this grant are 680 pounds of phosphorus per year and 255 tons of sediment per year. By addressing the sources of pollutant contamination, this project will help protect the Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed and remediate the water quality impairments of the Minnesota River. Long-term water quality monitoring of the Minnesota River by MPCA will be used to determine if improvements are being realized.
2. This project will provide an important framework for citizen involvement, which will contribute to long-term public participation in water quality awareness and stewardship. This project will provide for outreach and education activities meant to create conversations, build collaboration, and strengthen community involvement in water quality issues. An estimated 3,279 mailings are projected to be distributed to households within the watershed.
3. This project will continue the excellent working relationships HCWP has built with collaborating organizations, such as local, county, state, and federal technical agency representatives, non-profit organizations, and industries, to prioritize and implement the most cost-effective BMPs in critical areas within the Renville County portion of the Minnesota River – Mankato Watershed. It is projected that six meetings will be held with collaborating organizations.

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## 4. Gantt Chart **(see attached)**

## 5. Project Budget **(see attached)**